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NEWS

Winchester starts ADA work at Town Hall, library walkways and parking lots

NEIL ZOLOT | CORRESPONDENT

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The parking lot behind Town Hall, leading up to the library, is scheduled for work in order to comply with ADA requirements. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/NELL ESCOBAR COAKLEY

Work on walkways and parking lots at Town Hall and the Winche
Public Library are scheduled for mid-June and July in order to co

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Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

“We’re making improvements to exterior walkways for existing accessible entrances,” Special Projects Manager Meg White said. “It’s not a full reconstruction, but in areas not in compliance.”

“Accessibility isn’t what it should be, but the town is working towards it,” Disability Access Commission Chair, Education Facilities Planning and Building Committee member and retired rehabilitation counselor Lisa Matrundola said. “Things are moving in the right direction.”

She added a new accessible kiosk at Town Hall is another good example.

Parking areas around the Winchester Public Library and Town Hall will undergo work to comply with ADA requirements. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/NELL ESCOBAR COAKLEY

“The Winchester Council on Aging and Jenks Center are develop plan for making Winchester an ‘age-friendly’ community,” Jenks Center

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and Winchester Council on Aging Director Phillip Beltz added in reference to the benefits accessibility has for the elderly. “Age-friendly describes a movement to make communities more welcoming and livable for older residents and people of all ages. It describes the efforts we can take together as a community to create places where people can grow up and grow old together.

“AARP has identified eight areas for communities throughout the country to focus on improving: outdoor spaces and buildings, respect and social inclusion, transportation, housing, social participation, civic engagement and employment opportunities, community and health services and communication and information,” he added. “Any effort to improve accessibility and achieve compliance with ADA requirements is positive.”

The tentative schedule is for walkways at Town Hall parking lot and the Mill Pond side in early to mid-June, walkways at the library in late June and repaving the parking lot between Town Hall and the library in late June and early July.

“The majority of work should be done by mid to late July, but this is a weather dependent project,” White said.

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Things will pretty much look the same, but the changes are important and necessary.

“A small difference can make a difference,” White said in reference to slight changes in grading. “Out of compliance is out of compliance and this is an effort to make everything completely accessible. It will look a little different because there’ll be new concrete.”

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The work will cost $263,000 with funds coming from the annual ADA related appropriation by Town Meeting through the Capital Planning budget.

“Anytime a modification is done over $250,000 it has to be up to the latest standards,” Matrundola pointed out.

The Disabilities Access Commission has been advocating for the project and others since a 2019 study on access to public buildings, funded by a Massachusetts Office of Disability grant.

The parking area behind Town Hall on a rainy morning. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/NELL ESCOBAR COAKLEY

“We did an evaluation that showed what needed to be modified,” Matrundola explained. “The three places we felt needed the most work were the Town Hall, library and High School, but the bond for re the High School came before an evaluation.”

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She added work on the High School will be next, followed by making sure the new Lynch School and various playgrounds are accessible.

“The state allows for modifications to be done in sections,” Matrundola said. “We have until 2029.”

Beltz also announced, “An Age-Friendly Winchester Committee was formed in the beginning of the year who have developed a survey for older Winchester residents (age 55 and older) to complete that will assess the town’s performance in providing an age-friendly environment. After completing the survey online, respondents will be entered in a raffle to win an iPad. The survey is available on the Jenks website as well as the Winchester website. Also, to encourage patrons to take the survey who do not have technological expertise or do not own a computer, Jenks staff are willing to teach you how to use the iPad and take the survey. Anyone with questions can call the Jenks Center.”

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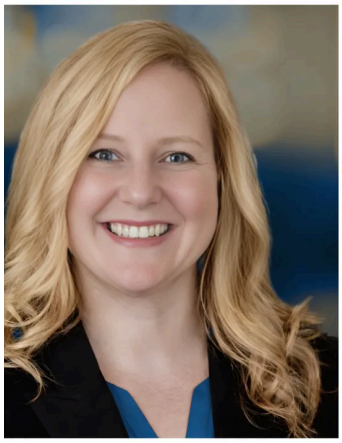

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Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

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The following was submitted by the Office of Sen. Jason Lewis: State Sen. Jason Lewis

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as of Jan. 25, 2025 — Source: Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board License to carry firearms Firearms identification card Winchester and Marblehead are the focus communities. Peers selected based on comparable population size, demographics and suburban

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joined his colleagues in the Massachusetts Senate to pass legislation that protects residents from discrimination in the housing market as the Trump administration abandons its enforcement of the federal Fair Housing Act. Illegal discrimination continues

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FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

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EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents ‘Syldason: You Are Welcome Here’

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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